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August 8, 2017

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** THE HONORABLE CAROL FUKUNAGA  
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** ANDREW SEKINE, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST *AS*  
OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

**SUBJECT:** CITIES REQUIRING SPRINKLERS IN EXISTING BUILDINGS

Attached herewith is a chart of "Cities Requiring Sprinkler Installation in Existing Buildings." The chart revises the chart transmitted to you on August 7, 2017 by adding a column summarizing existing residential buildings that are affected by the requirements of the respective city's sprinkler retrofit ordinance.

The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) 2012 model code requires the installation of automatic sprinkler systems in all new apartment building (any building containing three more dwelling units with independent cooking and bathroom facilities) and one- and two-family dwelling residential occupancies. The NFPA 2012 model code does not require existing apartment building and one- and two-family dwelling residential occupancies to be sprinklered (i.e., it does not require retrofitting). A jurisdiction that has adopted the NFPA 2012 (or later) model code, as is the case with the City and County of Honolulu, and that wishes to differ from the model code requirements, would need to enact an ordinance amending such model code.

Please contact me at Ext. 83870 if you have any questions.

Attachment

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### Cities Requiring Sprinkler Installations in Existing Buildings

City	Reference	Types of Existing Buildings Affected	Existing Residential Buildings Affected	Compliance Deadline	Applicable Standard	Incentives
Atlanta, GA	Atlanta Code of Ordinances Sec. 101.8	Business, mercantile, institutional, and residential building occupancies six (6) stories or more in height and any assembly occupancy >15,000 sq. ft.	Residential occupancies six stories or more in height	1995 (6 years), 1999 for buildings with >1,000,000 sq. ft. (10 years)	NFPA 13	None known
Chicago, IL	Chicago Code 13-196-205	Pre-1975 commercial buildings over 80 feet above grade that are not landmarked. Pre-1975 non-transient residential buildings are exempted.	Exempts multiple-dwelling non-transient residential use buildings.	1/3 of building - 5 years 2/3 of building - 9 years Entire building - 13 years	Chicago Building Code	None known
Houston, TX	City of Houston Ordinance No. 2005-1267	High-rise buildings more than 75 feet above grade	Exempts individually owned units; applies to common areas and corridors only	Water supply - 4 years ½ of floors - 9 years Entire building - 12 years	NFPA 13	None known
Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles Ordinance No. 158963 (1984)	Pre-1943 residential buildings three or more stories	Pre-1943 residential buildings three or more stories	None indicated	NFPA 13	None known
	Los Angeles Ordinances No. 163836 (1988) and No. 165319 (1989)	Buildings more than 75 feet high for which a building permit was issued prior to July 1, 1974, except Group R Division 1 occupancies (hotels, motels, and congregate residences>10 persons)	Exempts congregate residences for more than 10 persons	None indicated	NFPA 13	None known
New York City, NY	Local Law 5/1973	Existing high-rise office buildings more than 100 feet tall. Compartmentation with stair pressurization was	None	None indicated	None specified	None known

### Cities Requiring Sprinkler Installations in Existing Buildings

City	Reference	Types of Existing Buildings Affected	Existing Residential Buildings Affected	Compliance Deadline	Applicable Standard	Incentives
		allowed in lieu of sprinkler system.				
	Local Law 41/1978	Certain places of assembly providing live entertainment or used as a cabaret.	None	1 year	None specified	None known
	Local Law 26/2004	Office buildings and any other buildings classified as occupancy group E (Business – office buildings, banks, civic administration buildings, radio and television stations) 100 feet or taller. Compartmentation was not allowed as substitute.	None	2019 (15 years). 7- and 14-year progress reports are required	None specified	None known
Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia Fire Code F-503.4 (1991). <i>The pertinent language no longer exists in the Philadelphia Fire Code.</i>	All high-rise buildings except for R-2 (multiple-family) occupancies	None	8 years	NFPA 13	None known
San Antonio, TX	San Antonio Ordinance No. 2015-11-12-0946	Buildings more than 75 feet high, except residential high-rises with individually-owned units	Exempts residential high-rises with individually-owned units	Water supply - 6 years ½ of floors - 9 years Entire building - 12 years	International Fire Code (IFC-15)	None known
San Diego, CA	San Diego Ordinance No. 0-17172	Buildings more than 75 feet high; Residential Group R-2 occupancies (Residencies with more than two dwelling units and permanent occupants) later exempted	Exempts residencies with more than two dwelling units and permanent occupants	1/3 of building - 4 years 2/3 of building - 7 years Entire building - 10 years	Uniform Building Code Standard 38-1	None known

### Cities Requiring Sprinkler Installations in Existing Buildings

City	Reference	Types of Existing Buildings Affected	Existing Residential Buildings Affected	Compliance Deadline	Applicable Standard	Incentives
San Francisco, CA	San Francisco Building Code Sec. 3414.27	Buildings more than 75 feet high, except Residential Group R-2 occupancies and qualified historical buildings	Exempts residencies with more than two dwelling units and permanent occupants	2006 (12 years)	NFPA 13	None known
San Jose, CA	San Jose Ordinance No. 23372	Buildings more than 75 feet high	Residential buildings more than 75 feet high	1993 (3 years)	NFPA 13	None known

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# Few US cities mandate sprinklers in old residential towers

*Published: Sunday, July 23rd 2017, 7:01 am HST**Updated: Monday, July 24th 2017, 3:26 am HST*

HONOLULU (AP) - A high-rise fire recently claimed the lives of three people in Honolulu, and the apartment building where the blaze broke out had no fire sprinklers.

The tower overlooking Waikiki was constructed in 1971, before sprinkles were required for new construction in the city, a trend echoed in major cities across the U.S.

While most cities mandate sprinklers in newly built high-rises, many older residential towers lack the safety measure. Here's a look at policies in some of the country's largest cities:

## NEW YORK

New York City requires older office buildings taller than 100 feet to install sprinkler systems. Residential high-rise buildings must install sprinkler systems if the building undergoes significant renovations, according to the city Department of Buildings.

## LOS ANGELES

High-rise buildings - except residential dwellings - constructed before 1974 are required to be retrofitted with sprinklers. Residential buildings erected before 1943 that are at least three stories high must have sprinklers in some areas, including stairways and hallways, according to the Los Angeles Fire Department.

## CHICAGO

For older high-rise buildings, most commercial towers are required to be retrofitted with sprinklers, but residential buildings are not, according to the city Department of Buildings.

## HOUSTON

All high-rise commercial buildings and residential buildings - except privately owned condominiums - must have sprinklers, according to the Houston Fire Department.

## PHILADELPHIA

A city ordinance requires commercial buildings, but not residential buildings, to be retrofitted with sprinklers, according to the city Department of Licenses and Inspections.

## SAN ANTONIO

Sprinklers must be installed in all residential and commercial high-rise buildings, regardless of age. There's one exception: In residential high-rises with condominiums, only the common areas are required to have sprinklers, according to the city fire department.

## SAN DIEGO

The city had a sprinkler retrofitting law, but it was taken out of the municipal code, said Larry Trame, assistant fire marshal for the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. The department is pushing to reinstate the law, but it is facing pushback over the cost.

## DALLAS

City officials say there are 89 high-rise residential buildings, including 23 with partial sprinkler coverage and three with none. Dallas does not require older residential buildings to be retrofitted with sprinklers, according to the National Fire Sprinkler Association.

#### SAN JOSE

All high-rise buildings - including residential - were required to be retrofitted with sprinklers beginning in 1983. There were only 11 such buildings at the time, and they were given three years to comply. But it took a decade to get them all done, said Ray Simpson, the city's deputy fire marshal.

#### SAN FRANCISCO

In 1993, San Francisco required retrofitting high-rise commercial buildings and tourist hotels with sprinklers. But the requirement excluded residential and historic buildings, according to the city Department of Buildings.

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